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Date: 25 Jan 68

Item: # 33

Ref: #

Clifford, Clark

CLIFFORD (SCHEDULED)

BY JOHN HEFFERNAN

WASHINGTON, JAN. 25 (REUTERS)--THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE TODAY UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOMINATION OF CLARK M. CLIFFORD AS SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AFTER HE TOLD THEM MILITARY ACTION WOULD NOT SECURE THE RELEASE OF THE PUEBLO 83-MAN CREW FROM NORTH KOREA.

BUT CLIFFORD, 61, WARNED THAT DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE NORTH KOREAN CAPTURE TUESDAY OF THE INTELLIGENCE SHIP COULD RESULT IN A THREAT TO U.S. SAFETY.

IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES THE PRESIDENT MIGHT CALL UP RESERVES, HE SAID. THE WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCED A CALL-UP OF 14,600 RESERVISTS A FEW MINUTES BEFORE HIS STATEMENT TO THE COMMITTEE.

CLIFFORD WAS ASKED BY COMMITTEEMAN SEN. HOWARD W. CANNON (D., NEV.) IF HE FAVORED U.S. SEIZURE OF THE PUEBLO FROM THE NORTH VIETNAMESE PORT OF WONSAN, OR SEIZURE OF NORTH KOREAN SHIPS ON THE HIGH SEAS.

"I KNOW THE PRESIDENT IS MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO REACH A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION. YOU WILL NOTE THAT NONE OF THOSE ALTERNATIVES WILL GET THOSE 83 MEN OUT...AND THE PRESIDENT WANTS THOSE 83 MEN," CLIFFORD REPLIED.

(MORE) WU/AG 4:03P

These comments represent the initial and tentative reaction of the Office of Current Intelligence to the attached item from the news services.

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FIRST ADD WASHINGTON CLIFFORD X X X REPLIED.

IN A TWO-HOUR SESSION BEFORE THE COMMITTEE CLIFFORD ALSO SAID HE WAS OPPPOSED A SUSPENSION OF THE BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM. THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION WILL GO TO THE FULL SENATE NEXT WEEK. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SEN. RICHARD NIXON (R.-CA.) SAID HE HAD SELDOM SEEN "SUCH OVERWHELMING APPROVAL OF A NOMINATION."

IF THE SENATE AFFIRMS THE COMMITTEE'S VOTE, THE 61-YEAR-OLD UNOFFICIAL ADVISER TO THREE PRESIDENTS WILL SUCCEED ROBERT S. McNAMARA WHO LEAVES THE POST LATE NEXT MONTH TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD BANK.

DURING QUESTIONING BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE PUEBLO CRISIS, CLIFFORD SAID HE WAS NOT AT LIBERTY TO COMMENT FULLY, ADDING THAT HE HAD ATTENDED WHITE HOUSE MEETINGS ON THE CRISIS AT THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST.

(NONE) WU/AG 4:00P

SECOND ADD WASHINGTON CLIFFORD X X X REQUEST.

IN THE BOMBING DISCUSSION CLIFFORD SAID HE HOPED THE TIME WOULD COME WHEN HE COULD AGREE TO A SUSPENSION OF THE BOMBING.

"THAT TIME CERTAINLY HAS NOT ARRIVED..." HE DECLARED. HE TOLD THE COMMITTEE HE BELIEVED THE BOMBING "HAD SERVED AN EXTREMELY USEFUL PURPOSE."

HE REFERRED TO INTELLIGENCE REPORTS WHICH CLAIM THE BOMBING HAD SEVERELY IMPEDED THE FLOW OF SUPPLIES TO THE ENEMY, AND HAD DISRUPTED VIET CONG CAMPAIGNS.

THE DOOR TO PEACE IN VIETNAM, HE CONTINUED, WILL OPEN WHEN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE REALIZE THEY CANNOT WIN.

"I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF NEGOTIATIONS JUST FOR THE SAKE OF NEGOTIATIONS," HE SAID. "I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF FORCING ANY GOVERNMENT ON SOUTH VIETNAM THAT THEY DO NOT VOLUNTARILY CHOOSE."

CLIFFORD ALSO EMPHASIZED HIS APPROVAL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY WHICH CRITICS HAVE SAID OUGHT TO BE ABOLISHED OR RESTRICTED.

CLIFFORD CALLED THE AGENCY "NECESSARY," ADDING THAT THE "NATION CANNOT ENDURE WITHOUT THE BEST POSSIBLE INTELLIGENCE OPERATION THAT WE CAN FURNISH OUR COUNTRY."

CLIFFORD TOLD THE COMMITTEE HE HAD AGREED TO GIVE UP HIS WASHINGTON LAW PRACTICE, AND SELL CERTAIN SECURITIES HE HAD BEEN HOLDING.

WU/AG 4:10P

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